狂骨の声

2

きょうこつのゆめ

原作 京極夏彦
作画 志水アキ

怪

狂骨の夢

THE CRAZY BONES DREAM

story: Kyougoku Natsuhiko art: Shimizu Aki
translation & typesetting: sana @ shikiganai scans

TRANSLATOR'S NOTES

This chapter mentions Shinto funerals, so a little historical background is necessary. Japan has two major religions: Shinto and Buddhism. Shinto, the native religion of Japan, tells the story of how the gods of Heaven subjugated the gods of the Earth and founded the Imperial family. According to the Shinto faith, the current Emperor of Japan is directly descended from the sun goddess Amaterasu. Buddhism was imported from India via Chinese scholars in the 800s. It follows the teachings of the Buddha, an Indian prince who preached of breaking the cycle of reincarnation and achieving a state of perfect spiritual enlightenment. Although many Westerners see Buddhism as a purely philisophical religion without gods, Japanese Buddhism is actually *full* of gods, demi-gods, saints and demons. Over the centuries, the "Mikkyou" (Esoteric Buddhism) religion developed, fusing some of the weirder elements of Indian Buddhism with Shinto beliefs. Onmyoudou, a Japanese religion based on Taoism and Chinese astrology, was also incorporated into Mikkyou. Christian missionaries came to Japan in the 1500s, and as you can probably guess, elements of *that* got incorporated into Japanese religion too. So religion in Japan is *complicated*, and there's often not a clear line between Shinto, Buddhism, Taoism and Hinduism.

So back to funerals: Shinto is a religion with no written scriptures, so in the beginning, funeral customs were very casual. Rituals varied from town to town, and often a priest wasn't even required. As Buddhism grew popular among the nobility during the Heian Period (784-1185), funerals involved a mishmash of Shinto, Buddhist, and Onmyoudou beliefs. During this time, Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines were deeply - and often violently - involved in politics. In the Edo Period (1603-1868), the Japanese government was wary of Christian missionaries selling guns to rival clans, so they endorsed Buddhism as a de facto state religion. Buddhist temples kept records of births and deaths, so they naturally conducted most funerals.

CONTINUED
on next page

TRANSLATOR'S NOTES (CONTINUED)

In 1868, pro-Imperial forces overthrew the shogun's government during the Meiji Revolution. The Imperialists wanted to suppress Buddhism and promote an official "State Shinto" religion that would solidify the Emperor's power, but Buddhists retaliated strongly against the new bans. So, the Meiji government adopted the Western idea of "separation of church and state." To appease the angry Buddhist public, they separated formal "State Shinto" (which was more political than religious) from local "Folk Shinto" and Buddhism. State Shinto priests were forbidden from performing private rituals like funerals. Folk Shinto priests were still allowed to perform funerals, but ironically, the government's financial support for the big State Shinto shrines meant that many of the smaller Folk Shinto shrines couldn't afford to operate. Folk Shinto shrines fell into ruin, Buddhists continued to dominate the funeral business, and Shinto funerals became extremely rare. By the 1950s, when this manga takes place, most people weren't even aware that Shinto funerals had ever existed. Today, though, they're once again growing in popularity.

While Shinto and Buddhist funerals may look similar (there's a lot of incomprehensible chanting and ritual), the objectives are different. Buddhist funerals are intended to ensure that the deceased is reincarnated on a better plane of existence, while Shinto funerals are intended to enshrine the deceased as a god. During a Shinto funeral, the soul of the deceased is transferred to a special tablet that can be worshipped in the family shrine. Gods in Shinto aren't like the gods in most other religions, though. They aren't all-powerful, and there are literally millions of them. Humans can become gods, but so can animals or rocks or vague, abstract ideas. In a way, Shinto records Japan's ancient and forgotten history through mythical stories.

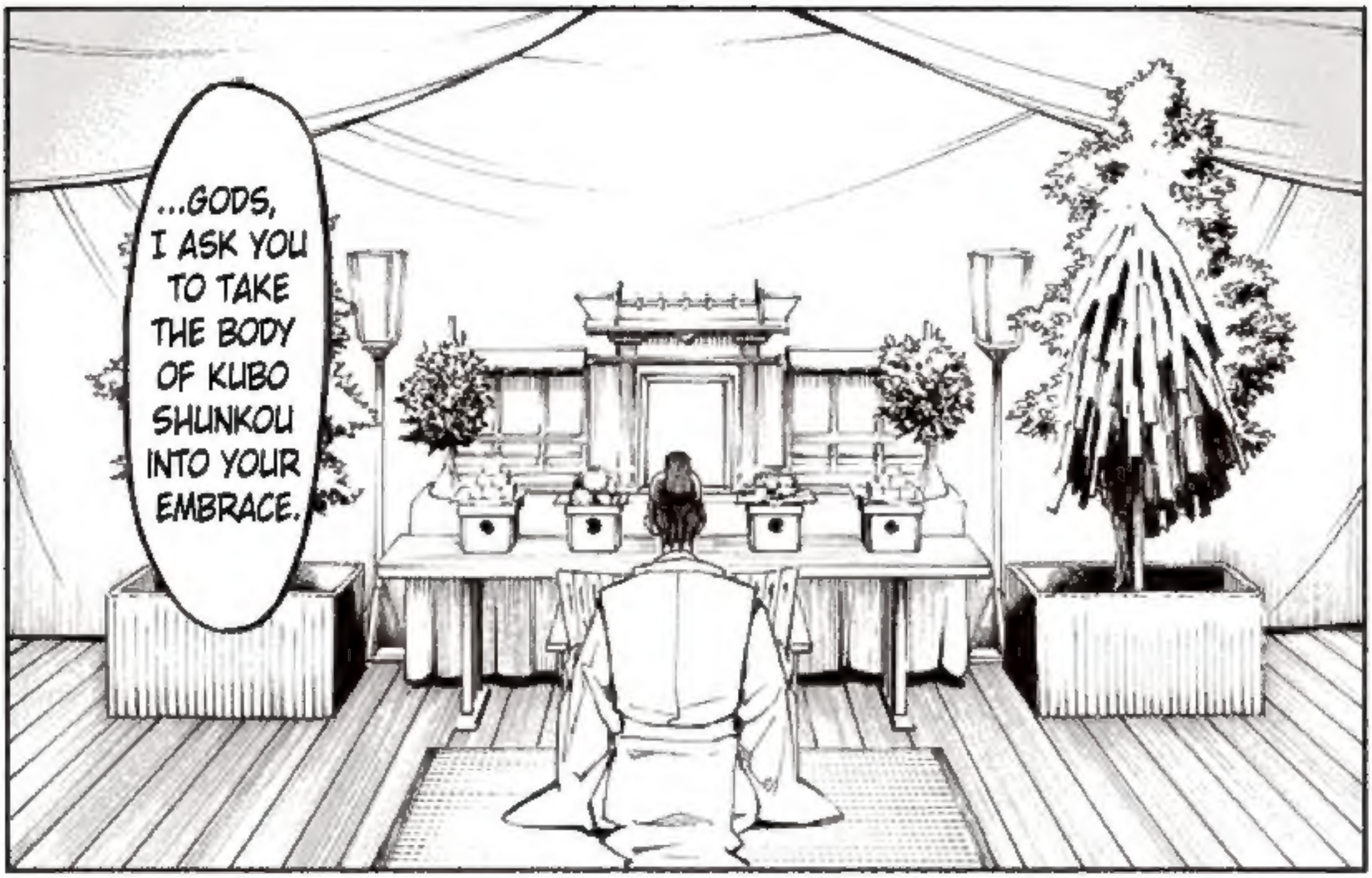
SPOILER ALERT

Major spoilers ahead for Part 2 of this series, "Mouryou no Hako." You might want to watch the MnH anime or read the manga first. But you won't really be spoiled for too much if you skip ahead... in Kyougoku stories, the fun part isn't figuring out *who* committed the crime, it's figuring out *why*.

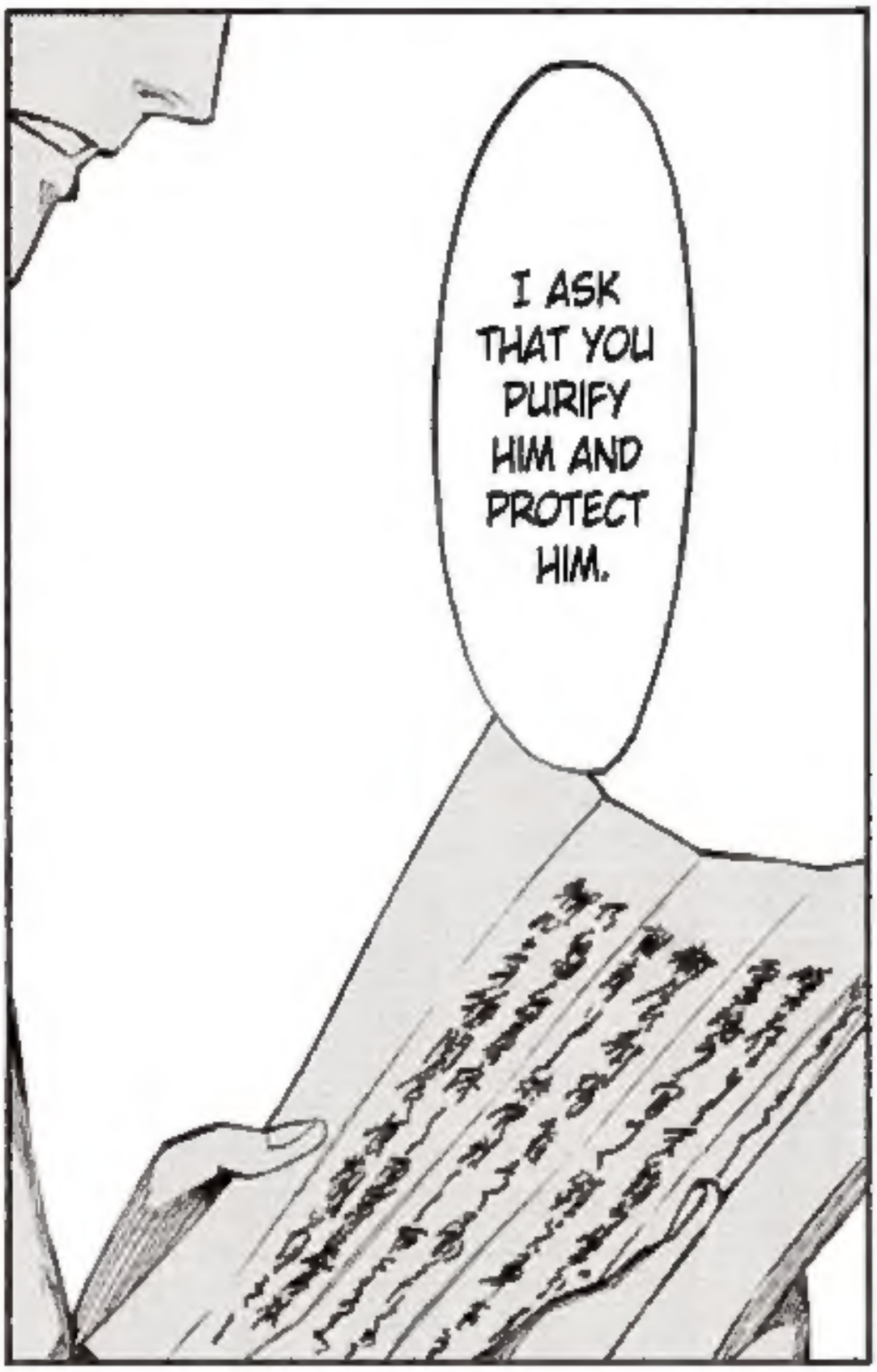
狂骨の夢 2

原作 京極夏彦　作画 志水アキ

CHAPTER 3



I ASK THAT YOU TRANS-FORM THE ESSENCE OF HIS SOUL INTO PURE LIGHT...



I ASK THAT YOU TAKE AWAY HIS SADNESS AND HIS ANGER.

I ASK THAT YOU DESCEND TO THIS IMPURE WORLD AND TAKE HIS SOUL AWAY TO THE DISTANT WORLD OF SPIRITS, AND WELCOME HIM INTO HIS PLACE AMONG THE EIGHT MILLION GODS.

CHAPTER 3

AND I ASK YOU TO PROTECT AND COMFORT THE SOULS OF THOSE GATHERED HERE TODAY, UNTIL THEY TOO JOIN THEIR ANCESTORS IN THE HEAVENS.

I didn't know that Shinto funerals were even a thing.
And it's weird to see Kyougokudou in white robes...
I'm used to seeing him as as a bookstore owner or as a part-time exorcist...
This just feels wrong.

Kubo Shunkou...
He was a novelist who lived a strange life and died an even stranger death.

Two months ago, when Kubo died, Kyougokudou was wearing all black.

I PRESENT YOU WITH OFFERINGS OF FOOD AND WINE, SO THAT WE MAY SPEND THE EVENING IN VENERATION OF YOUR POWER AND GRACE.
PLEASE STAY AND ACCEPT THESE GIFTS.

Maybe it's because we were both writers.

I suppose you could say that we were rivals, but I always felt inferior to him.

Even though he was a murderer, I feel a sense of pity for him...

I wonder what his father is thinking right now...

No temple or church would agree to perform funeral rites for a serial killer, so Kyougokudou offered to lay his soul to rest.

That's Terada Hyoue, Kubo's estranged father...

Oh, I guess it's my turn...

NOTE A "tamagushi" (a branch decorated with paper strips) is a traditional Shinto offering to the gods.

And then I'm supposed to clap twice...

First I place the offering, right?

"Tama-gushi"

Um...

THE SHINTO RELIGION ORIGINALLY HAD NO FUNERAL RITUALS.

ACTU-ALLY,

UNOFFI-CIALLY, OF COURSE.

DURING THE MEIJI ERA (1868-1912), THE GOVERNMENT ENFORCED THE SEPARATION OF SHINTO AND BUDDHISM AND THE JINGUUJI WERE ABOLISHED.

BUT SHINTO FUNERALS WERE STILL PERFORMED FOR PRIESTS...

JINGUUJI WERE SHINTO SHRINES THAT PARTNERED WITH BUDDHIST TEMPLES.

THEY OFTEN INCLUDED HOSPITALS AS WELL.

EVEN-TUALLY, SHINTO RITUALS WERE PERFORMED AT TEMPLES CALLED "JIN-GUUJI."

ACTUALLY, IF YOU GO BACK FAR ENOUGH IN TIME, BUDDHISM ALSO LACKED FUNERAL RITUALS...

HOWEVER, "SIN" IS LARGELY IRRELEVANT IN SHINTO.

BUDDHISM IS DEEPLY CONCERNED WITH SIN.

MOURNERS WOULD CONFESS THEIR OWN SINS WHEN A LOVED ONE DIED, SO THAT THEY MIGHT SYMBOLICALLY TAKE ON SOME OF THE BURDEN OF THE DECEASED'S SINS AND SAVE THEM FROM HELL.

SO THE PURPOSE OF WORSHIPPING SHINTO GODS IS TO CALM THEIR SPIRITS.

ANYONE AND ANYTHING CAN BECOME A SHINTO GOD.

THE GODS SUFFER, THE GODS WEEP, THE GODS GROW ANGRY, AND THE GODS CAN BE VINDICTIVE.

OF COURSE, SHINTO GODS AREN'T LIKE THE CREATOR GOD OF CHRISTIANITY.

IN A SHINTO FUNERAL, THE DECEASED IS ELEVATED TO THE STATUS OF A GOD.

UNDER BUDDHISM, HIS SOUL WOULD BE AT THE BUDDHA'S MERCY, AND HIS VICTIMS WOULD CONTINUE TO CURSE HIM...

PERHAPS DOOMING THEMSELVES TO HELL IN THE PROCESS.

IF YOU THINK ABOUT IT THAT WAY, A SHINTO FUNERAL IS APPROPRIATE FOR KUBO SHUNKOU.

HIS CRIMES, HIS WORLDLY DESIRES AND HIS PAIN LIVE ON.

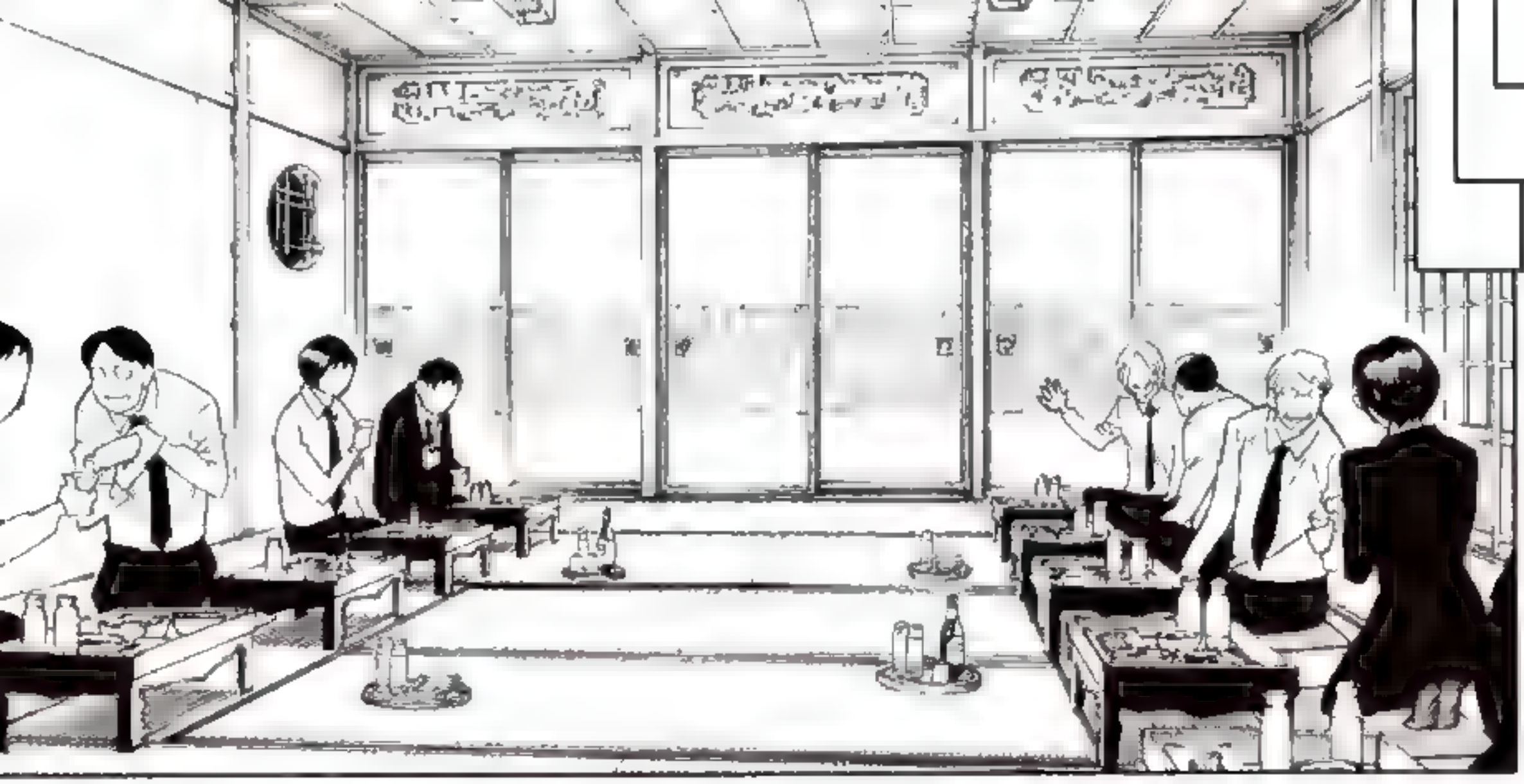
BUT NOW, WE CAN BEGIN TO EASE HIS TROUBLED SOUL.

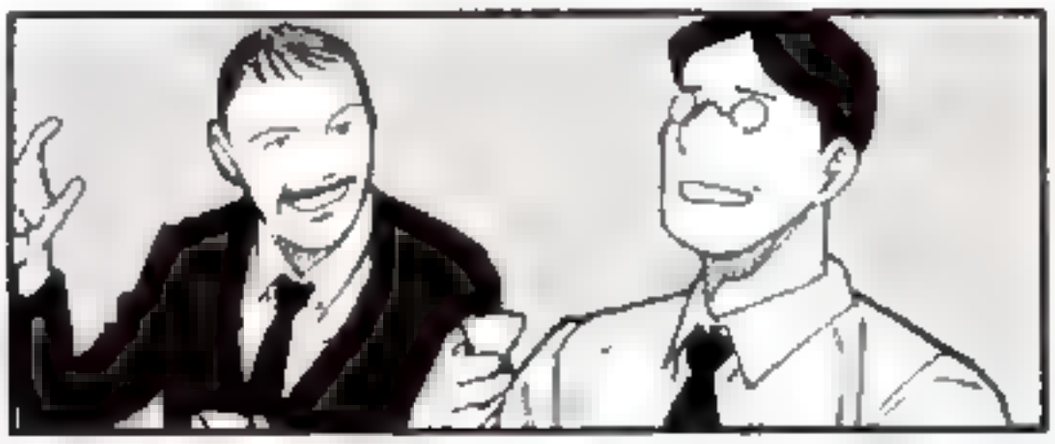
KUBO SHUNKOU LIVES ON.

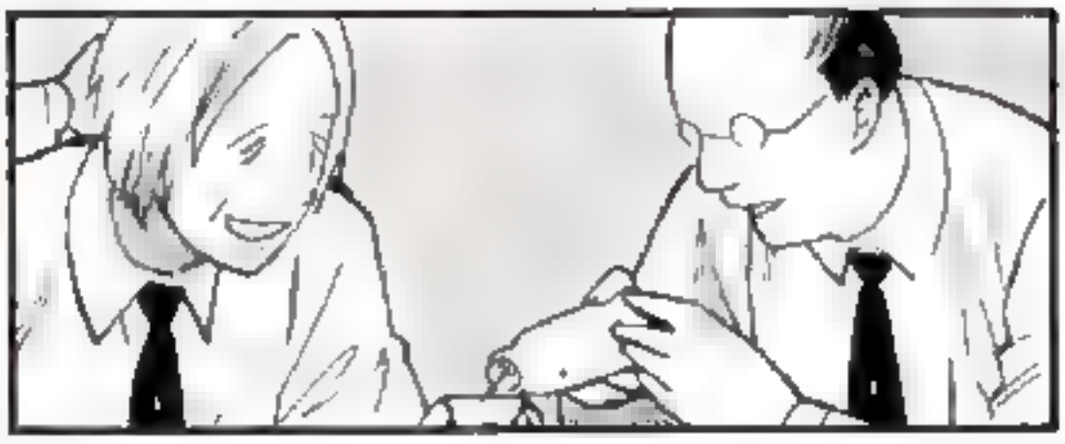
WE ALL MUST MOURN.

BUT...

KUBO SHUNKOU HAS BECOME A GOD, AND HIS FATHER, TERADA HYOUE, WILL BECOME HIS FIRST WORSHIPPER.







SHOULDN'T YOU BE SOCIALIZING WITH THE OTHER WRITERS, SEKIGUCHI-SAN?

UM, WELL... I DON'T REALLY KNOW ANYBODY, SO...

Most of the guests here are writers and editors who knew Kubo.
Except for Aoki-kun here ..
He's a police detective who helped bring Kubo in.

OH, IT'S ATSUKO-KUN AND KOIZUMI-KUN!

SEKI-GUCHI-SENSEI!

Koizumi Tamayo
She's also an editor at the same magazine.

Chuuzenji Atsuko...
She's an editor at Kitan Publishing, and she's Kyougokudou's younger sister.

step

UDA-GAWA-SENSEI!

PANIC

Wait, I'm nobody special!!

PANIC

Huh?

ACTUALLY, THERE'S SOMEONE WHO WANTS TO MEET YOU!

OOH,
YOU MUST BE
SEKIGUCHI
TATSUMI-KUN!

He's the king of horror fiction!!

U-Udagawa Takashi...!

His works are said to combine the vivid strangeness of Edogawa Rampo and the dignified aesthetics of Izumi Kyouka...

OH...

I...

NOW THAT KUBO SHUNKOU IS GONE, I'M GLAD THAT THERE ARE STILL YOUNG FANTASY WRITERS LIKE YOU WHO CAN CARRY THE TORCH FOR OLD-TIMERS LIKE ME!

lean

He's huge!

SHAKE

I'VE ENJOYED READING YOUR WORKS!

What should I say?

But I'm way too shy to meet him!

Um...

Yeah, and I keep making excuses...

YOU KNOW, I'VE BEEN TRYING TO SET UP A MEETING BETWEEN THE TWO OF YOU FOR AGES!

HM?

I'M NOT REALLY THAT GOOD...

Why am I apolo-gizing?

I'M SORRY ...

I...

?

THAT'S NOT...

waah!

I MEAN ...

EH!?

BUT...

IT'S HARDLY THE TIME TO TALK ABOUT WORK!

OH NO, I'M THE ONE WHO SHOULD BE APOLO-GIZING...

WE'RE AT A FUNERAL!

Ah... Udagawa-sensei looks genuinely sad about Kubo's death...

SEE YA!

HEY, I'VE GOTTA GO.

EH!?

Don't just leave me...

I THOUGHT HE'D BE THE ONE TO OPEN THE DOOR TO A NEW ERA OF FANTASY LITERATURE...

AND NOW HE'S GONE.

AH... YEAH...

OH... UM...

IT'S REALLY A SHAME...

I WAS ONE OF THE FIRST TO RECOGNIZE KUBO-KUN'S GENIUS, AND I ENCOURAGED HIM TO BECOME A PROFESSIONAL WRITER...

YOU'RE RIGHT!

UDAGAWA-SENSEI! LONG TIME NO SEE!

SORRY I'M LATE!

OH, CHIEF EDITOR YAMAZAKI!

Me, the future of the company!?

laugh

YES, WE JUST RELEASED AN OMNIBUS EDITION OF HIS STORIES!

YOUNG WRITERS LIKE HIM ARE THE FUTURE OF OUR COMPANY.

laugh

AH, YAMAZAKI-SAN, I WAS JUST TELLING SEKIGUCHI-KUN THAT HE'S VERY TALENTED!

I'm such a loser!

I... I'M NOT GOOD AT THINGS LIKE THIS...

AH... UM... I....

ISN'T THAT RIGHT, SEKIGUCHI-KUN?

You've got a gift!

OH, SURE. I'LL TALK TO YOU LATER.

HUH!?

ACTUALLY, THOUGH, THERE'S SOMETHING THAT I WANTED TO TALK TO SEKIGUCHI-KUN ABOUT IN PRIVATE.

WOULD IT BE ALRIGHT IF WE HAD A MOMENT ALONE?

N-NO, IT'S FINE.

SORRY, I DIDN'T MEAN TO BE SO PUSHY...

THE TRUTH IS THAT I CAME HERE SPECIFICALLY TO TALK TO YOU.

OH...

What kind of rumors has he heard...?

I KNOW THAT YOU WERE INVOLVED IN THE KUBO CASE.

AND OF COURSE,

TO ME? BUT WHY?

WELL, I'VE HEARD A LOT ABOUT YOU FROM KOIZUMI-KUN!

This is all a misunder-standing!

This fall, I was involved in the Kubo case.

And last summer, I was involved in the Kuonji case.

Two murder investigations in one year...

I guess that looks pretty suspicious.

But it's not like I wanted to get involved...

and really, I only played a small part in those cases.

Udagawa-sensei must have read about the rumors and gotten the wrong idea...

Is THAT what he came to ask me about..?

Hypholoma fasciculare

Ramaria flava

Paralepistopsis acromelalga

Hygrocybe imazekii

Marasmius pulcherripes

My other work..?

I mean, I used to be a biologist...

But I specialized in slime molds and mush-rooms...

YOU'VE HEARD OF SEKIGUCHI-SENSEI'S OTHER WORK, RIGHT?

OF COURSE!

PLEASE ENJOY YOUR-SELVES.

CHUUZENJI SHOULD BE HERE SOON, BUT UNTIL THEN,

Mm, I love chicken..

Sign: Miyoshi Chicken Hot Pot Restaurant

I'M ALWAYS RESEAR-CHING,

OR WRITING.

OR GOING TO MEET-INGS,

HUH...

I DO MOST OF MY WRITING AT HOME.

SO... YOU'RE LIVING IN ZUSHI NOW?

YEAH, I'VE GOT A PLACE WITH A GREAT OCEAN VIEW.

BUT I'M NOT AT HOME VERY OFTEN TO ENJOY IT!

IF YOU'RE AT HOME, YOUR EDITORS ALWAYS KNOW WHERE TO COME BOTHER YOU!

YOU'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF THE HOUSE MORE!

HA HA HA HA

I'D PROBABLY NEVER GET ANYTHING DONE IF NOT FOR MY WIFE NAGGING ME...

I'D RATHER BE FISHING THAN WRITING!

YOU DON'T EVEN NEED TO CATCH ANYTHING TO ENJOY FISHING!

MY PLACE IS IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE AND I DON'T EVEN HAVE A TELEPHONE, BUT I STILL LIKE TO GET OUT OF THE HOUSE.

SORRY I'M LATE!

OH, ATSUKO-KUN!

He sure is candid...

ACTUALLY...

I WANTED TO TALK TO BOTH OF YOU.

YOU AND MISS CHUUZENJI.

SHE'S GOT A GOOD HEAD ON HER SHOULDERS, SO I LISTENED.

KOIZUMI-KUN IS THE ONE WHO SUGGESTED THAT I TALK TO YOU.

Now he's getting to the point...

WELL, ANY-WAY...

GULP

OH COME ON, DON'T LOOK SO SERIOUS!

JUST HEAR ME OUT!

HA HA HA HA HA

NO, THIS IS THE FIRST I'VE HEARD OF IT!

A-CHAN, DO YOU KNOW WHAT HE'S TALKING ABOUT?

So Koizumi-san planned this...

AND CHUUZENJI-KUN, YOU'VE GOT A KNACK FOR GETTING TO THE BOTTOM OF SUPERNATURAL STORIES.

SEKIGUCHI-KUN, I'VE HEARD THAT YOU'RE VERY KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT MENTAL ILLNESS.

Don't tell me we're being dragged into another case...

Her older brother is obsessed with weird monsters and ancient history.

And Atsuko-kun is a reporter for Kitan Monthly, a magazine that seeks to shed light on the world's mysteries.

KITAN MONTHLY #6

Well... I guess I've read a lot about mental illness and psychology in the course of trying to understand my own depression

SHE'S BEEN ACTING STRANGELY LATELY...

ACTU-ALLY, THIS IS ABOUT MY WIFE.

SHE'S ABOUT 30 YEARS YOUNGER THAN ME, THOUGH...

SHE'S AROUND 27.

WELL, SHE'S NOT AS YOUNG AS YOU ARE.

23

Wow, that's young...

I SEE...

OH, THAT'S RIGHT.

I HEARD THAT YOU HAD A BEAUTIFUL YOUNG WIFE.

SHE'S TROUBLED BY THE SOUND OF THE SEA...

SEKIGUCHI-KUN, COULD THAT BE SOME SORT OF MENTAL ILLNESS?

SO, WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOUR WIFE?

IT'S HARD TO EXPLAIN...

HM?

BUT SHE'S TERRIFIED.

SHE CLAIMS THAT SHE'S SEEING MEMORIES FROM HER PAST LIFE.

IF I DIDN'T KNOW BETTER, I'D THINK SHE WAS POS-SESSED...

BUT THAT CAN'T BE RIGHT.

IT'S POSSI-BLE...

HM...

SHE GREW UP IN THE MOUNTAINS, SO AT FIRST I THOUGHT SHE JUST WASN'T USED TO IT... BUT HER FEAR HASN'T GONE AWAY.

THE SOUND SENDS HER INTO A PANIC.

"THE BONES IN THE WELL!?"

I LOVED THAT BOOK!

I CAME ACROSS IT FOUR YEARS AGO, WHEN I WAS WRITING A NOVEL BASED ON THE FAMOUS "BANCHOU SARAYASHIKI" KABUKI PLAY.

IT'S A CASE STUDY WRITTEN BY HIRATA ATSUTANE...

SUP-POSEDLY, IT'S BASED ON A TRUE STORY.

THE REBIRTH OF KATSUGOROU

OOH, WELL THANK YOU!

HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF "THE REBIRTH OF KATSU-GOROU?"

YEAH, LIKE A REINCAR-NATION.

HER PAST LIFE?

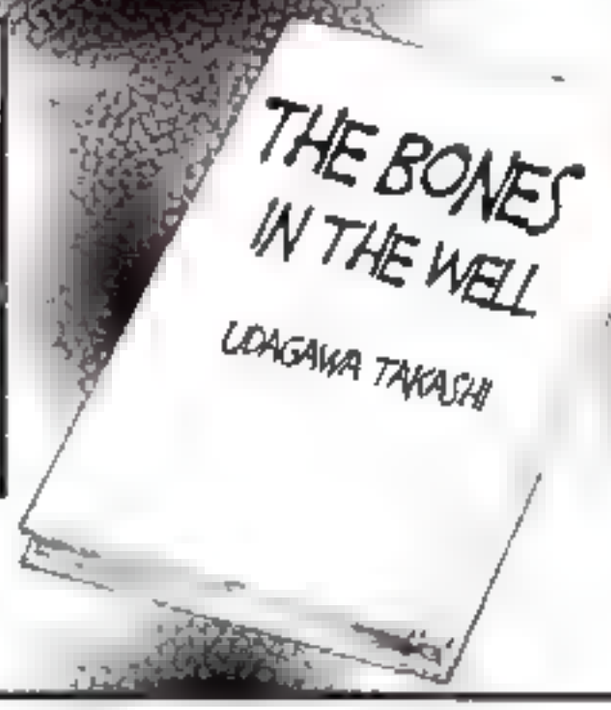
HM... NO...

Is that a thing?

NOTE Hirata Atsutane (1776-1843) was a Japanese sociologist and Shinto scholar who collected local myths and legends, including the story of a child named Katsugorou who claimed that he was the reincarnation of another local child who'd died. The boy gave a detailed account of his previous life that seemed to be supported by fact. Banchou Sarayashiki ("The Plate Mansion of Banchou") is one of Japan's most popular ghost stories. It involves a servant girl, Okiku, whose ghost returns to haunt her murderer. I'll go into much more depth on that in Chapter 7.

The heroine is a young woman.

"The Bones in the Well..."



As she grows older, she remembers the names of those other people and places.

From childhood, she has memories of other places, other lives.

And...

She dreams of visiting those places.

She convinces her grandmother to take her to a town from her memories,

The houses,

The people ...

Everything is just as she remembers it.

"She must be our daughter's reincar-nation!"

As it turns out, one of the families in that town had a daughter who'd disappeared at the exact time of the heroine's birth.

And when she reaches the age that the other girl had been when she vanished, she falls in love and gets married.

So the heroine continues to visit her past self's parents and relatives.

But then...

She soon grows to resemble the girl who dis-appeared...

The heroine brutally murders her husband.

On their wedding night...

"Go look in the well."

And there, at the bottom of the well...

Is the corpse of the girl who dis-appeared.

Of course, there was a lot more to the story.

The murdered girl's husband was a serial killer, or something like that...

And that's what makes it scary.

But still, the heroine's life was completely taken over by someone else...

So the heroine was bound by the curse of her past self...

I'M NOT SAYING THAT IT WAS PLAGIARIZED, OF COURSE!

NAH, I JUST USED BITS OF OTHER STORIES.

IT'S A MASTERPIECE OF HORROR FICTION...

BUT WAIT...

I SEE..

I SUPPOSE YOU COULD SAY IT WAS BASED ON MY WIFE.

IT'S THE STORY OF A WOMAN WITH NO MEMORIES WHO SLOWLY BEGINS TO REMEMBER ANOTHER LIFE...

WELL ...

MM, THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT TOO AT FIRST...

BUT THIS STORY GOES DEEPER.

MAYBE THE SOUND OF THE WAVES IS DISTURBING HER SLEEP?

MAYBE SHE JUST NEEDS REST...

IS IT POSSIBLE THAT YOUR WIFE IS JUST SUFFERING FROM FATIGUE?

IT SOUNDS A LOT LIKE DEJA VU, DOESN'T IT?

MY WIFE'S NAME IS AKEMI.

AFTER THE DEATH OF MY FIRST WIFE, I WAS ALONE FOR EIGHTEEN YEARS.

I WAS A WRITER AND A WANDERER, SO I DIDN'T FEEL LIKE SETTLING DOWN AGAIN.

THEN, IN 1944, WHEN THE WAR GREW EVEN MORE VIOLENT, I FLED TOKYO AND WENT BACK TO MY HOMETOWN IN HONJOU, SAITAMA.

SHE'S ONLY THE SECOND WOMAN I'VE EVER LOVED.

MY FIRST WIFE DIED YOUNG - SHE PASSED AWAY FROM ILLNESS BACK IN THE TAISHO ERA.

IT MUST HAVE BEEN RIGHT AROUND THE TIME WHEN AKEMI WAS BORN.

WHEN THE WAR IS OVER, I'LL BE ABLE TO WRITE WHAT I WANT...

I DID SOME FARM LABOR, BUT I SPENT THE REST OF MY TIME THINKING.

BUT I DIDN'T FEEL LIKE WRITING POLITICAL PROPAGANDA, SO I COULDN'T FIND MUCH WORK.

THAT'S WHEN I CAME UP WITH THE ROUGH IDEA FOR "THE BONES IN THE WELL."

"EVERY DAY, I'D WALK ALONG THE DESERTED PATH BY THE RIVER, SPINNING STORIES IN MY HEAD.

AND THEN...

NEAR THE END OF AUTUMN...

Wow ...

That sounds like my dream life!

MOSTLY PICTURE BOOKS FROM THE EDO PERIOD AND BOOKS ON MAKING SAKE...

AND WHEN I WASN'T THINKING ABOUT WRITING, I WAS READING.

NOT THAT THERE WERE MANY BOOKS TO BE FOUND...

BRRR

WHOOSH!

IT WAS A COLD, WINDY DAY.

WHAT THE...

!!

!!

DASH

!?

SPLASH

SPLASH

SPLASH

CHAPTER 1

?

?

DAMN IT, I CLIMBED DOWN HERE FOR NOTHING ...

I WONDER IF THERE'S AN EASIER WAY TO GET HOME ...

SFX: *rushing water*

A WOMAN !?

C-C-
COLD!

SFX: *rushing water*

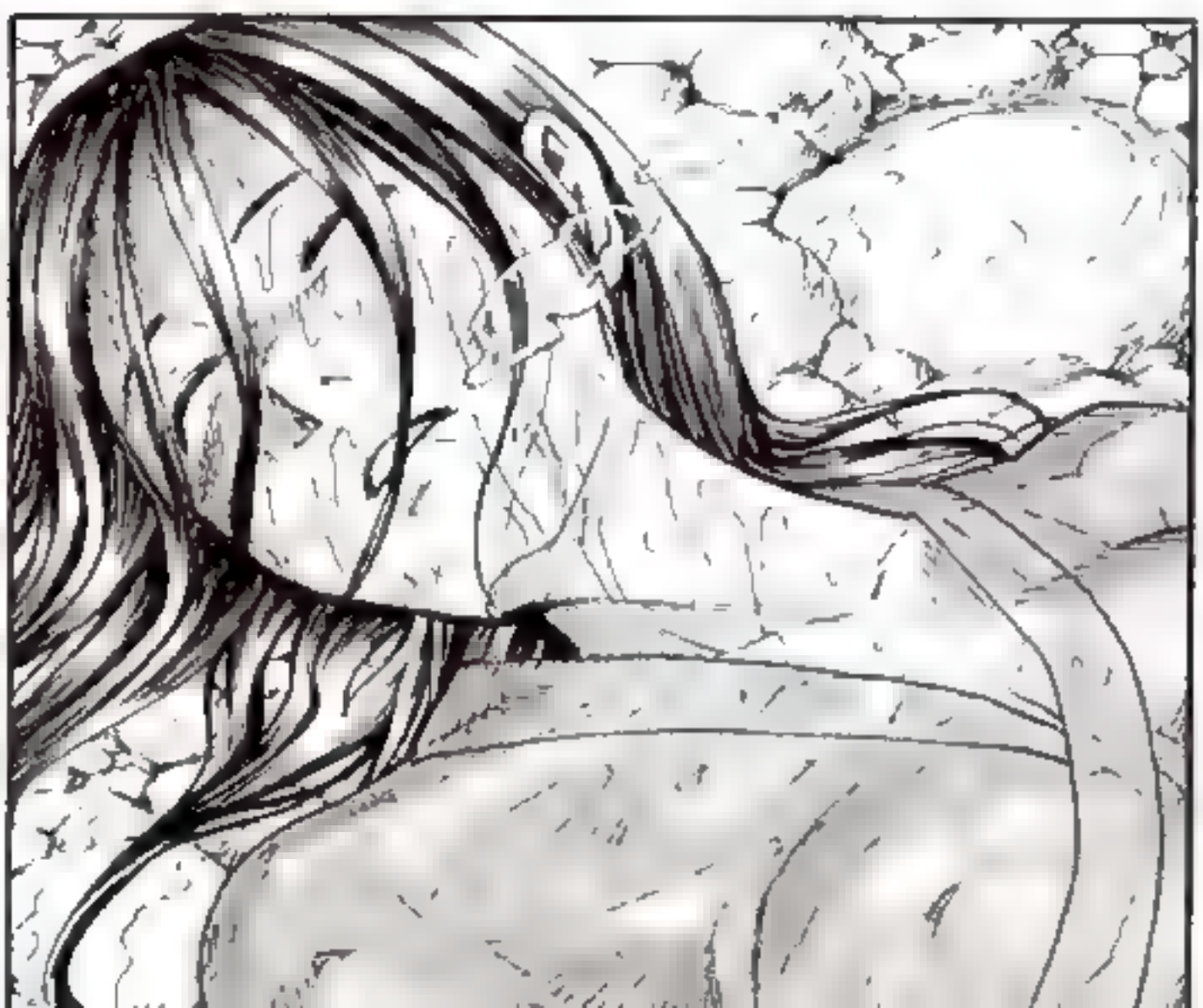
WHAT'S SHE DOING HERE?

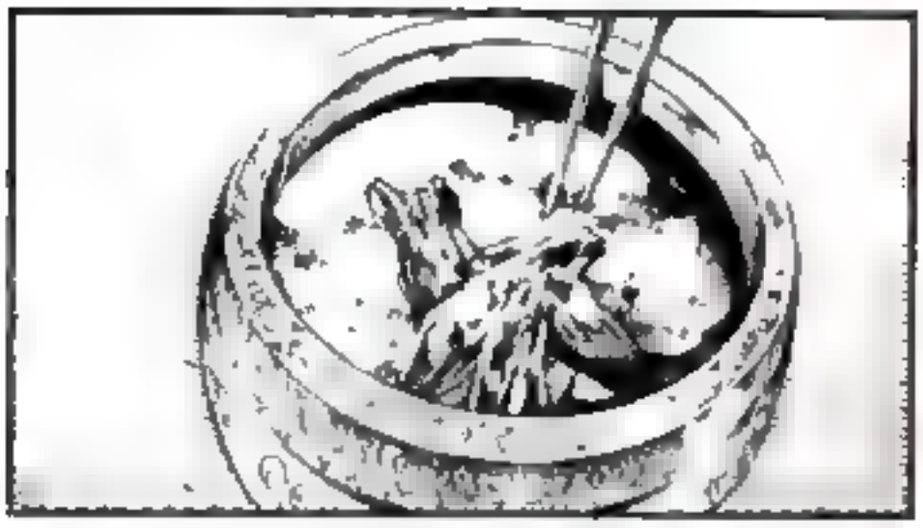
SHE'S STILL ALIVE...
SHE'S DAMNED LUCKY...

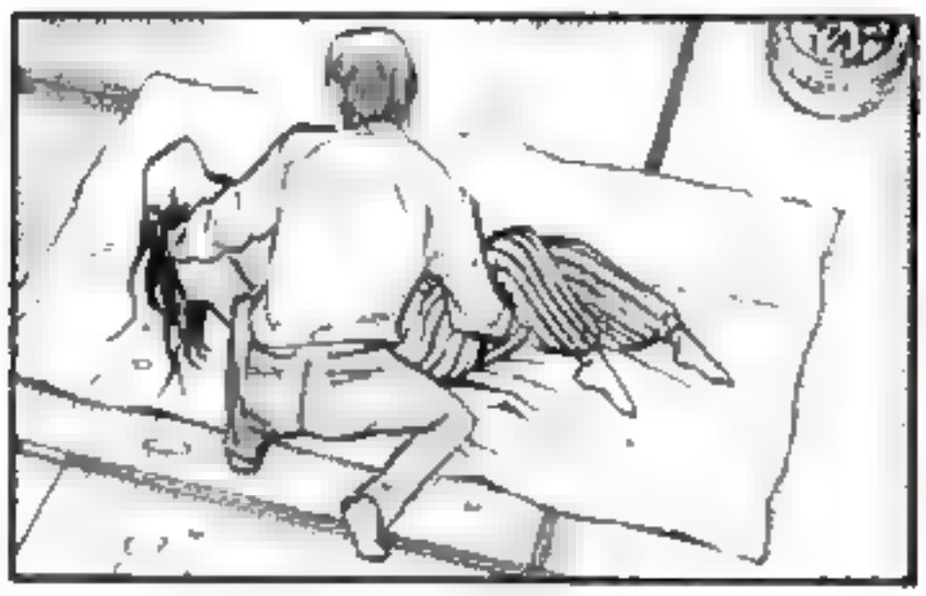
DRAG
DRAG

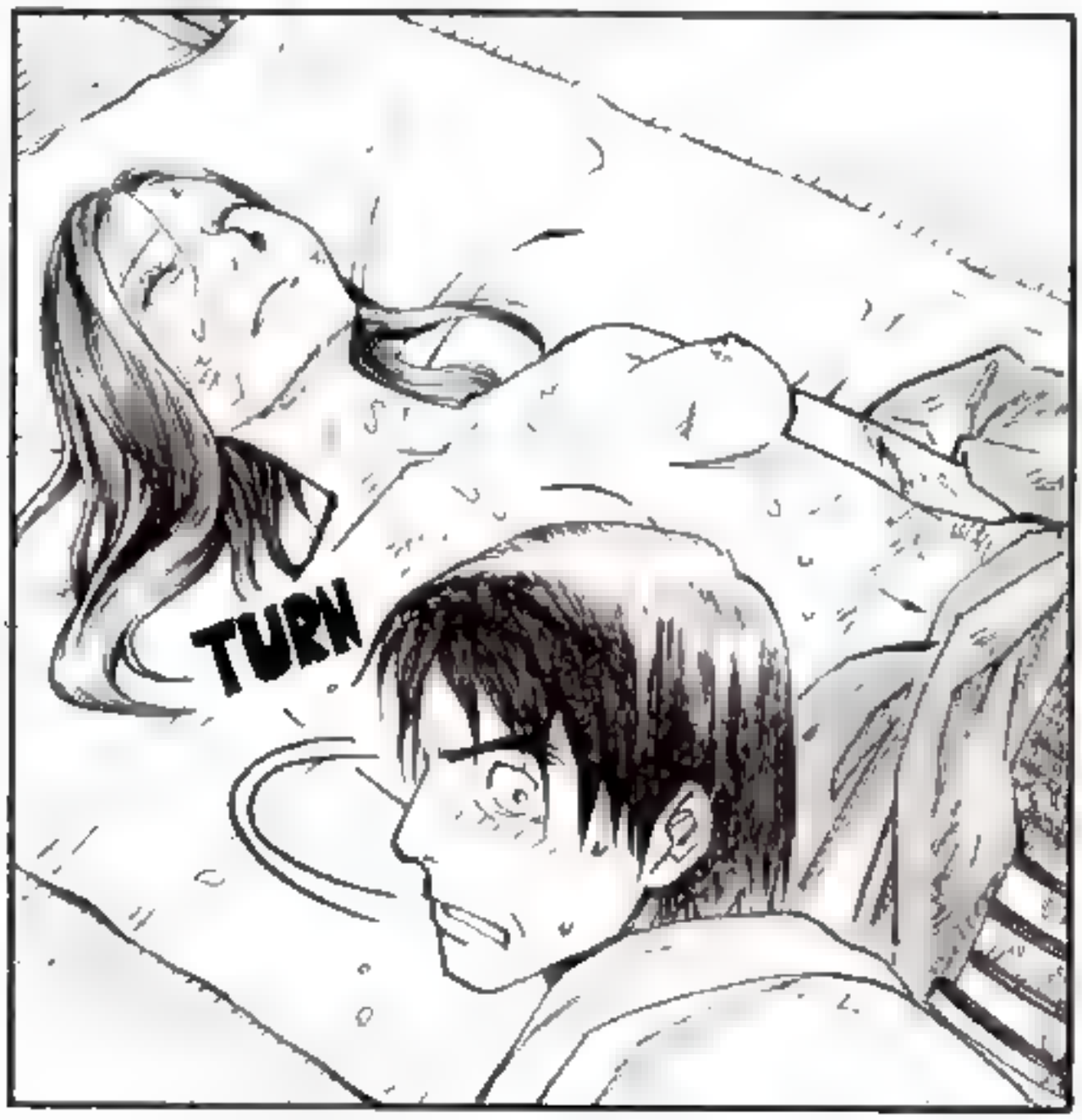
HEY, ARE YOU ALRIGHT !?
SHAKE
SHAKE
HEY!

SHE'LL FREEZE IN THESE WET CLOTHES...
HUFF
HUFF








TURN

PULL
PULL

!

I'VE GOT TO GET HER DRY...
DAMN IT, NOW'S NOT THE TIME TO BE MODEST!

HUH, JUST MONEY ENVELOPES AND A FEW COINS...

SHE WAS HOLDING THIS...

IT MUST BE IMPORTANT.

NOTE Money envelopes like this are often given as wedding presents.

Property of
Sata Akemi
Shimanopou,
Ueda, Nagano
Prefecure

SATA...
AKEMI...?

OKAY...

DON'T GET THE WRONG IDEA, THOUGH!

I'M NOT A SLEAZEBAG, I WAS JUST TRYING TO RESCUE HER!

SO, UH...

THAT'S HOW I MET MY WIFE.

AND THEN...

...WELL, ANYWAY, SHE FINALLY WOKE UP THE NEXT DAY.

SHOCK

HEY, ARE YOU AWAKE?

Wh- where am I...?

IT'S ALRIGHT, I WON'T HURT YOU.

YOU ALMOST DROWNED, BUT I SAVED YOU.

WHAT WERE YOU DOING IN THE RIVER?

DID SOMEBODY PUSH YOU IN?

YOU'RE AT MY HOUSE.

MY NAME'S UDAGAWA...

UDAGAWA TAKASHI.

IT WAS WRITTEN ON THE LABEL IN YOUR BAG.

YOUR NAME IS AKEMI, RIGHT?

SHE'S SO FRIGHTENED THAT SHE CAN'T EVEN THINK...

SHAKE

.....?

IS THAT NOT YOUR NAME?

HUH?

I... I don't know.

Ake... mi?

I don't know who I am...

I don't know anything...

I don't know...

.....

IT'S ALRIGHT.

I'M SURE YOUR MEMORIES WILL COME BACK.

YOU CAN STAY HERE WHILE YOU RECOVER.

SHE HAS AMNESIA.....!?

SO I'M LEAVING HER IN YOUR CARE.

I HAVE TO GO AWAY FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS,

SHE'S, UH, THE DAUGHTER OF A RELATIVE.

YEAH.

WELL, THEN...

Sata Akemi
Shimanogou, Ueda,
Nagano Prefecure

I'LL JUST SEE WHAT I CAN FIND...

THE DAY I FOUND AKEMI WAS THE ANNI-VERSARY OF MY FIRST MARRIAGE...

BUT I GUESS IT MADE ME FEEL LIKE I HAD TO HELP HER.

I KNEW IT WAS JUST A COINCI-DENCE,

SO I WENT TO SHIODAIRA, THE SO-CALLED "KAMAKURA OF SHIN-SHUU."

EXCUSE ME...

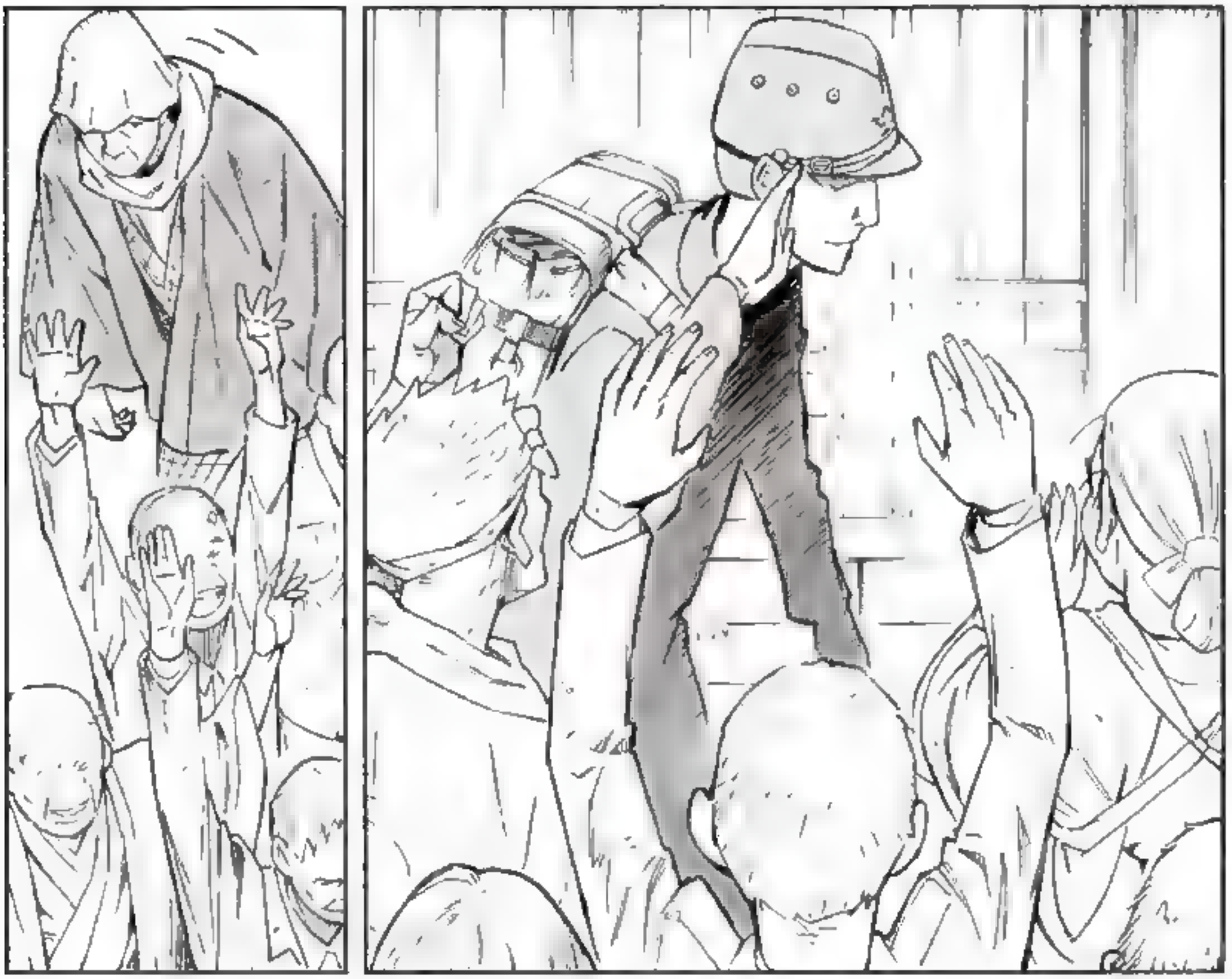
IS THERE ANYONE NAMED "SATA" AROUND HERE...?

DURING THE SECOND KAMAKURA SHOGUNATE, THE GRAND-SON OF HOUJOU YOSHITOKI, YOSHIMASA, RETIRED TO A TEMPLE THERE.

NOTE Kamakura is a city near Tokyo that's famous for its many beautiful temples and shrines. Shiodaira was one the site of one of the powerful Houjou clan's castles and a large Zen temple, but the town slowly fell into ruin after the castle was abandoned. "Shinshuu" is another name for Nagano.

whisper
I HEARD HE WAS DECAPI-TATED..
whisper
I HEARD HE WAS A DRAFT DODGER ...
?
NO, WHY?
ARE YOU FROM THE MILITARY POLICE?
THEN WE DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THOSE PEOPLE!
IF YOU WANT MORE INFORMATION, YOU SHOULD ASK HER FORMER BOSS, KAMOTA-SAN.
SATA AKEMI?
SHE WENT MISSING MONTHS AGO...
I SEE...
HE'S THE OWNER OF THE KAMOTA LIQUOR SHOP.
AKEMI USED TO WORK THERE.
KAMOTA-SAN WAS HER LEGAL GUARDIAN.
KAMOTA?

Sign: "Kamota Liquors"



UM...

ARE YOU KAMOTA-SAN?

YES, I AM.

TAKE A LOOK AT THAT KAMOTA!

HE'S SO PROUD OF HIS WAR HERO NEPHEW THAT HE WON'T GET HIS NOSE OUT OF THE AIR!

SO THAT'S KAMOTA-SAN...?

THERE'S SOME-THING I WANTED TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT.

!

I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THIS WOMAN...

Sata Aken

Shimanogou, U

Nagano Prefe

KAMOTA SHUUZOU, OWNER OF THE SAKE SHOP.

YES...

THAT MUST BE THE SAME AKEMI WHO USED TO WORK HERE.

HER HUSBAND TRIED TO DESERT THE ARMY...

THAT'S A SERIOUS FELONY DURING WARTIME.

THERE'S NO WAY SHE COULD HAVE STAYED HERE.

AND SINCE I INTRODUCED HER TO HIM, I FELT RESPONSIBLE...

REALLY !?

YES...

I'M THE ONE WHO GAVE HER THAT MONEY.

AND I URGED HER TO FLEE WHILE SHE HAD THE CHANCE.

NATURALLY, AKEMI WAS THE PRIME SUSPECT, BUT SHE HAD AN ALIBI.

IT TURNED OUT THAT THE KILLER WAS ANOTHER GIRL WHO WORKED HERE...

SHE'S STILL A FUGITIVE.

SOON AFTER AKEMI'S HUSBAND RAN AWAY, HIS CORPSE WAS DISCOVERED...

HE'D BEEN DECAPITATED.

SHE MUST HAVE BEEN SHUNNED BY EVERY PERSON IN TOWN.

NATIONAL PRIDE IS SERIOUS BUSINESS...

IT WOULD HAVE BROUGHT SHAME ON THE VILLAGE.

HONESTLY, I THINK THE LOCALS WERE MORE WORRIED ABOUT HER HUSBAND BEING A COWARD THAN THEY WERE ABOUT THE MURDER!

SO AKEMI-SAN WAS INNOCENT...

BUT SHE WAS STILL FORCED TO FLEE HER HOME.

But there was a mistake in the paperwork and I got sent to the front lines...

I was supposed to get an exemption from army service because I was in college at the time, so I was basically a draft dodger too.

So he was a draft dodger, huh...?

I STARTED COLLECTING ARTICLES RELATED TO SATA NOBUYOSHI'S DEATH...

AND I STARTED COLLECTING INFORMATION ON THE WOMAN WHO KILLED HIM, TOO.

HE TOLD ME ABOUT HER MARRIAGE TO THE LATE SATA NOBU-YOSHI...

HE TOLD ME THAT HER ENTIRE FAMILY DIED IN A FIRE WHILE SHE WAS WORKING AT HIS SHOP.

SHUUZOU TOLD ME EVERY-THING HE KNEW ABOUT AKEMI.

I SEE...

YES, THAT MAKES SENSE.

BUT THERE'S ONE THING THAT WORRIES ME...

...WHAT'S THAT?

I SHOULDN'T TELL YOU THIS, BUT...

AKEMI IS TECHNICALLY STILL UNDER INVESTI-GATION BY THE MILITARY POLICE.

I'M SUPPOSED TO REPORT TO THEM IF I KNOW WHERE SHE IS.

IT'S BEST IF YOU DON'T COME BACK HERE AGAIN.

HM... WELL...

COULD I SECRETLY BRING HER HERE SO YOU CAN CONFIRM IT?

WHAT IF SHE'S *NOT* REALLY SATA AKEMI?

ACTUALLY, HE'S SUPPOSED TO COME HERE TOMORROW...

I COULD ASK HIM TO CONFIRM HER IDENTITY FOR YOU.

HIS NAME IS SAKUMA-SAN.

ACTUALLY, I KNOW A SAKE DISTRIBUTOR WHO COMES FROM TOKYO EVERY YEAR.

HE'S BEEN A LOYAL CUSTOMER FOR 20 YEARS, SO HE'S SEEN AKEMI.

MINA... KATA...?

I...

I THINK I REMEMBER THAT NAME...

THAT'S RIGHT, "MINAKATA" WAS YOUR MAIDEN NAME...

BUT YOU'RE A MARRIED WOMAN NOW!

THERE'S NO MISTAKE - THAT'S MINAKATA AKEMI-SAN!

MIND IF I SMOKE?

GO RIGHT AHEAD.

YEAH, HE CONFIRMED IT.

Huh...

SO SHE REALLY WAS AKEMI-SAN...

SHE DIDN'T REMEMBER ANYTHING ABOUT HER HUSBAND'S DEATH.

I COULDN'T HELP BUT WONDER HOW MUCH AKEMI REMEMBERED.

BUT EVEN AFTER A YEAR...

THE WAR WAS OVER, SO WE DECIDED TO MOVE BACK TO TOKYO.

I STARTED INTRODUCING HER TO PEOPLE AS MY WIFE, AND THAT WAS THAT.

sigh

AND BY 1946 OR 1947, I'D FALLEN IN LOVE WITH HER.

A MAN SUDDENLY SHOWED UP, CLAIMING TO BE A FORMER OFFICER FROM THE MILITARY POLICE.

BUT THEN...

THE MILITARY POLICE!?

SHE DIDN'T SAY.

BUT I HAD A BAD FEELING ABOUT IT, SO I DECIDED TO MOVE.

AND THEN HALF A YEAR LATER, WE MOVED AGAIN.

WHAT DID HE WANT?

I GUESS SHE REMEMBERED A LITTLE, BECAUSE IT SENT HER INTO A PANIC...

SHE COULDN'T EVEN BRING HERSELF TO TALK ABOUT IT.

YEP.

I WASN'T HOME AT THE TIME, SO AKEMI ANSWERED THE DOOR.

YOU'RE RIGHT.

IT GOT TO THE POINT WHERE I WORRIED EVERY TIME I LEFT THE HOUSE.

AM I RIGHT?

BUT THE OFFICER KEPT COMING ...

I WANTED A PLACE WHERE NO ONE COULD FIND US...

SO WE MOVED AGAIN.

BUT THIS TIME, I WANTED A HOUSE IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE.

STILL, I WAS WORRIED THAT SOMEONE MIGHT BE PROWLING AROUND OUR HOUSE, SO I ASKED A FRIEND OF MINE TO SECRETLY KEEP AN EYE ON THE PLACE...

AKEMI BARELY WENT OUTSIDE.

SHE'S THE KIND OF WOMAN WHO'D RATHER STAY HOME AND READ A BOOK.

BUT HEY, SHE HELPED PROOFREAD MY WRITING, SO THAT WAS FINE WITH ME.

BUT THE OFFICER STILL FOUND YOU?

YEAH.

I DON'T KNOW HOW HE DID IT...

sigh

BUT NOW THE SOUND OF THE OCEAN IS DRIVING HER MAD.

YEAH.

SO WE ENDED UP MOVING AGAIN.

WE'VE MOVED FOUR OR FIVE TIMES NOW.

OUR CURRENT HOUSE IS SO ISOLATED THAT I THOUGHT WE'D FINALLY GET SOME PEACE AND QUIET...

...BUT THE OFFICER STILL FOUND HER.

SIR...

IS IT POSSIBLE THAT YOUR WIFE ISN'T THE REAL SATA AKEMI?

WELL...

I GUESS YOU COULD SAY THAT MY WIFE HAS A TROUBLED PAST,

SO TO BE HONEST, I THOUGHT IT WAS JUST SOME KIND OF DELUSION.

LOUGH

HOW COULD THE MILITARY POLICE FIND YOU SO QUICKLY?

Yeah, I was wondering the same thing...

NO, I'M SURE THAT SHE REALLY IS SATA AKEMI.

A-A-CHAN!

WHAT IF THE "MEMORIES FROM ANOTHER LIFE" ARE JUST YOUR WIFE'S *REAL* MEMORIES TRYING TO RESURFACE?

SHE EVEN REMEMBERED THE PATTERN ON THE KIMONO SHE WAS WEARING ON A DAY WHEN HER BOSS PRAISED HER...

THE MEMORIES WERE TOO DETAILED TO BE FAKE.

SHE REMEMBERED LITTLE THINGS SHE DID AT WORK.

SHE REMEMBERED SEEING THE CHARRED BODIES OF HER FAMILY MEMBERS.

AS HER MEMORIES STARTED TO RETURN, SHE TOLD ME ABOUT HER LIFE AS SATA AKEMI...

AND THAT'S WHEN THESE MEMORIES OF "ANOTHER LIFE" STARTED FLOODING BACK.

A FEW MONTHS AGO, MY WIFE CAME ACROSS THE ARTICLES I'D COLLECTED REGARDING HER CASE 8 YEARS AGO...

BUT THEN...

I did it...

I killed my husband...

I...

SHE CLAIMED THAT SHE'D ALSO KILLED THE OTHER WOMAN WHO WAS SUSPECTED OF KILLING HER HUSBAND.

AND THAT'S NOT ALL...

WHAT ...!?

SENSEI, I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY...

IT HASN'T BEEN LONG ENOUGH FOR THE STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS TO APPLY.

IF ALL OF THIS IS TRUE...

THAT'S... WHOA.

BUT I THINK MY WIFE IS JUST DELUSIONAL.

HER FIRST HUSBAND'S TIME OF DEATH WAS SAID TO BE SOMEWHERE BETWEEN AUGUST 31ST AND SEPTEMBER 1ST, 1944.

SO THERE'S STILL 8 YEARS AND 3 MONTHS BEFORE THE STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS WOULD APPLY.

I KNOW.

NOTE In the 50s, the statue of limitations for murder was only 15 years in Japan! It was raised to 25 years in 2004, and recently they abolished it altogether.

SO THERE'S NO WAY SHE COULD HAVE KILLED HIM.

8/31 9/1 9/2

Husband's Murder

Akemi's Release Date

SHE HAS AN ALIBI FOR THE TIME OF THE MURDER...

FROM AUGUST 3ST TO SEPTEMBER 2ND, SHE WAS UNDER HOUSE ARREST AND INTERROGATION BY THE MILITARY POLICE.

Although I don't know how she would have paid them off...

How can he be so sure about that?

What if Akemi bribed a military police officer into falsifying her release date?

Why would she remember the murder but forget about the attempted cover-up and the suicide attempt?

...No, that doesn't work.

Maybe she couldn't pay up, so she tried to kill herself in desperation...

...Damn it, this sounds like a shitty crime novel.

And she almost drowned while she was trying to retrieve it?

Maybe she had a secret treasure that she'd hidden at the bottom of the river;

Um...

But what could he possibly want so much that he'd stalk her for eight years?

?

But still... That could explain why the officer is stalking her.

He wants his money, or whatever.

BUT...

DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHY SHE WOULD WANT TO KILL HIM AND CUT OFF HIS HEAD?

NOT A CLUE...

THE REAL KILLER WAS A WOMAN CALLED MUNAKATA TAMIE, WHO ALSO WORKED AT THE KAMOTA SAKE SHOP.

SHE DISAPPEARED WHEN SATA NOBUYOSHI TRIED TO ESCAPE FROM THE ARMY.

SEVERAL WITNESSES SAW THEM TOGETHER.

UM...

I DON'T GET IT...

WHY WOULD SHE WANT HIS HEAD?

BUT I DO KNOW ONE THING...

AND THAT'S THAT TAMIE WAS SEEN CARRYING A HUMAN HEAD SHORTLY AFTER IT HAPPENED.

BUT NOBODY'S SEEN TAMIE OR THE HEAD SINCE THEN.

For whatever reason, she must have thought it was necessary to decapitate him...

WHAT DO YOU MEAN...?

THAT'S WHY I WANTED TO TALK TO THE TWO OF YOU...

ANYWAY...

I WANT TO BELIEVE THAT AKEMI IS INNOCENT, BUT...

MORE STRANGE THINGS HAVE HAPPENED.

BUT MY WIFE CLAIMED THAT HER FIRST HUSBAND - THE ONE SHE THINKS SHE KILLED - HAD COME BACK FOR REVENGE.

AT FIRST I THOUGHT WE'D BEEN ROBBED...

WELL, A WHILE AGO, I CAME HOME ONE DAY AND THE HOUSE HAD BEEN TORN APART.

WELL... MAYBE SHE WAS JUST HALLU-CINATING?

AND APPARENTLY, HE WAS ALIVE AND WELL.

HE EVEN GOT HIS HEAD BACK.

ANY IDEAS?

NO... HE WAS FLESH AND BLOOD.

YOU MEAN A GHOST ...?

THE IKUSHIMA-TARUSHIMA SHRINE IN SHIMONOGOU STILL HAD THE CHARM ON RECORD,

SO IT WAS POSSIBLE TO COMPARE IT TO THE FINGERPRINTS ON THE CORPSE.

WHEN HE WAS FIRST CALLED TO WAR, HE WENT TO A SHRINE FOR A "VICTORY IN BATTLE" GOOD LUCK CHARM MADE WITH HIS HAND-PRINT.

THERE'S NO EVIDENCE THAT SATA NOBUYOSHI IS STILL ALIVE.

HE HELD HER DOWN AND RAPED HER.

REPEATEDLY.

ANYWAY, THAT DEAD BASTARD DIDN'T JUST SHOW UP TO SAY HELLO.

HE...

SO THE IDENTITY OF THE CORPSE WAS CONFIRMED...

OH SHIT, I'M SORRY!

THAT'S IMPOSSI-BLE, TOO...

LIKE, WHAT IF THE MILITARY POLICE FOUND SOMEBODY WHO LOOKED LIKE SATA NOBUYOSHI AND ORDERED HIM TO FIND HER?

WHAT IF IT WASN'T HIM?

BECAUSE SHE KILLED THE MAN WHO ASSAULTED HER.

THAT'S WHAT SHE SAYS.

SHE KILLED HIM, AND THEN SHE CUT OFF HIS HEAD.

SHE DID WHAT!?

SHE KILLED HIM!?

SHE...

.....

HE CAME BACK TWICE MORE AFTER HE WAS KILLED.

WHAT ...?

BUT EVEN AFTER THAT, THE MAN KEPT COMING BACK.

.....

NO, FOUR TIMES, IF YOU INCLUDE THE FIRST TIME EIGHT YEARS AGO...

SO SHE'S CUT OFF HIS HEAD FOUR TIMES?

SO...

YOUR WIFE HAS KILLED HER FIRST HUSBAND THREE TIMES?

It sure does sound like she's crazy...

I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT MY WIFE IS A KILLER...

SO THE ONLY LOGICAL EXPLANATION IS THAT SHE'S LOST HER MIND...

WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO?

IS MY WIFE ACTUALLY CRAZY?

.....

THAT'S WHAT SHE CLAIMS.

YEAH, I CONSIDERED THAT...

BUT SHE'S BEEN TOO WEAK TO GET OUT OF BED.

AND...

WELL...

I DON'T THINK THIS IS ALL IN HER HEAD ANYMORE.

UM...

MAYBE YOU SHOULD TAKE HER TO A SPECIALIST...

But how can I say that to a man who's worried about his wife?

AKE-
MI!?

!?

THE
FIRST
TIME...

HUH?

I...

WHAT'S
WRONG!?
DID A
THIEF DO
THIS!?

SHE KEPT
MUTTERING
NONSENSE ABOUT
DEATH AND
SKULLS AND
SHINTO PRIESTS
AND BUDDHIST
PRIESTS...

SHE
WAS IN A
STATE OF
DELIRIUM.

TREMBLE

I killed
him...

TREMBLE

I killed
him...

I cut
off his
head...

TREMBLE

AND IT HAP-PENED AGAIN?

SO I LEFT HER ALONE...

I FINALLY MANAGED TO GET HER CALMED DOWN.

I ASSUMED THAT SHE'D JUST HAD A BAD DREAM.

I WENT INTO THE GAR-DEN ...

BUT THEN ...

THE GARDEN ?

SO SHE BEGGED ME TO TAKE HER TO A CHURCH.

YEAH.

AND IT GOT WORSE.

THE THIRD TIME WAS TWO DAYS AGO, AND IT WAS THE WORST OF ALL.

SHE BEGGED ME NOT TO LEAVE HER ALONE AGAIN...

BUT THAT'S OBVIOUSLY NOT A PROMISE I CAN KEEP.

I DON'T GO INTO THE GARDEN VERY OFTEN, AND IT'S NOT VISIBLE FROM MY STUDY.

BUT THIS TIME, SHE'D LEFT ONE OF THE SLIDING DOORS OPEN...

THAT'S ...

GULP

COULD IT HAVE BEEN SOME KIND OF PARANORMAL PHENOMENON?

IS THAT EVEN POSSIBLE?

BUT I SAW THE BLOOD. IT WAS REAL.

...I DON'T KNOW.

I DIDN'T SEE A BODY.

SO SHE REALLY DID KILL SOMEONE ...!?

BUT LOGICALLY SPEAKING, IT'S PROBABLUY JUST A TRICK DONE WITH ANIMAL BLOOD OR PREVIOUSLY COLLECTED HUMAN BLOOD.

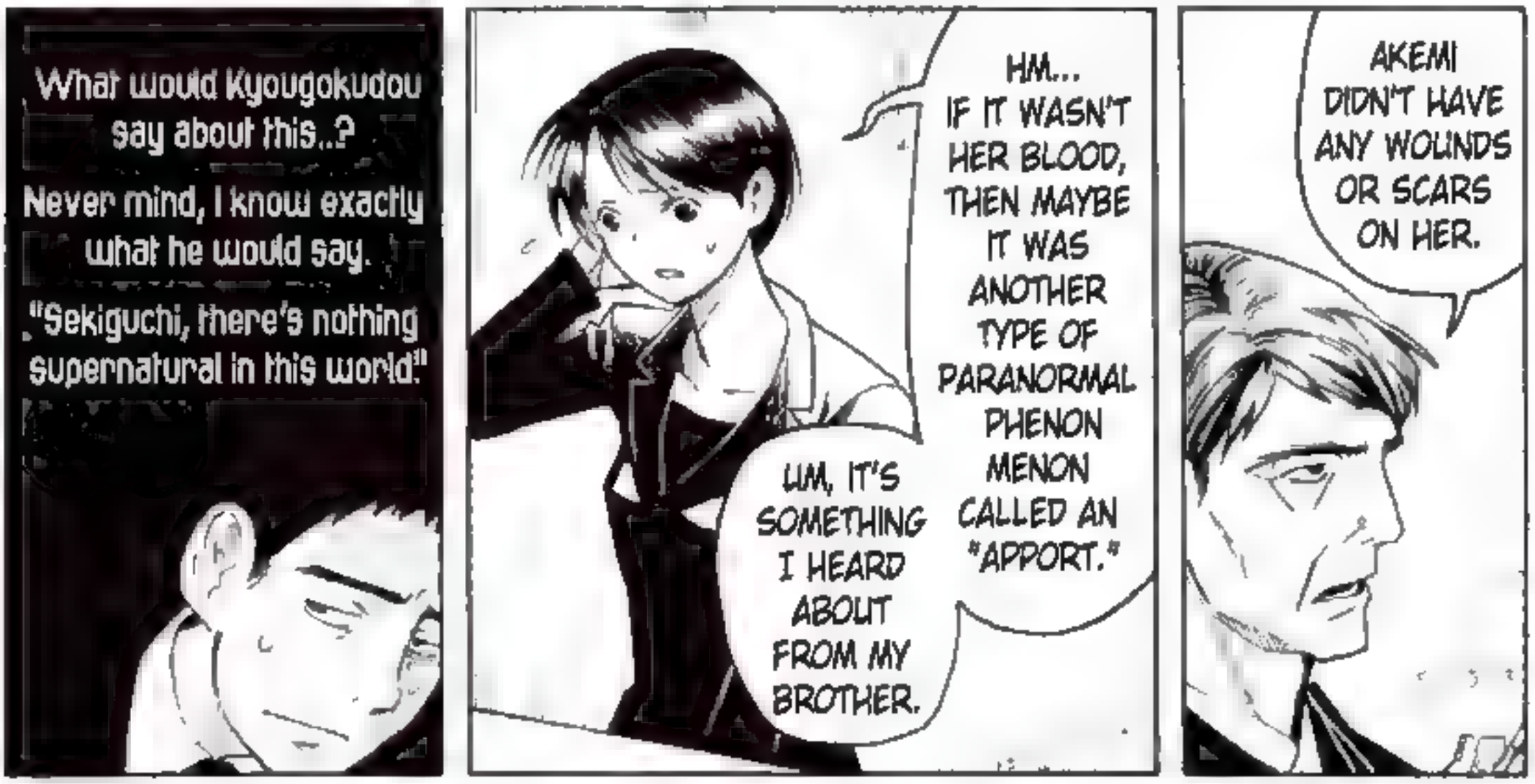
Blood flows from their hands like when Christ was nailed to the cross...!

But when they're examined afterwards, there's no sign of any injuries or scars.

Members of extremist Christian sects sometimes claim to have stigmata.

WELL... THERE'S SUPPOSEDLY A PARA-NORMAL PHENOMENON CALLED "STIGMATA" WHERE A PERSON CAN MIRACULOUSLY PRODUCE BLOOD WITHOUT ANY VISIBLE WOUNDS.

NOTE In paranormal studies, an "apport" is a physical phenomenon that's produced by a spirit during a seance. Mediums would magically produce "ectoplasm," flowers, stones, live animals, or other "gifts" from the spirits. However, in many cases, mediums were found to be hiding these apports in their clothes, behind their ears, or even up their buttholes...


What would Kyougokudou say about this..?
Never mind, I know exactly what he would say.
"Sekiguchi, there's nothing supernatural in this world."
HM... IF IT WASN'T HER BLOOD, THEN MAYBE IT WAS ANOTHER TYPE OF PARANORMAL PHENON MENON CALLED AN "APPORT."
UM, IT'S SOMETHING I HEARD ABOUT FROM MY BROTHER.
AKEMI DIDN'T HAVE ANY WOUNDS OR SCARS ON HER.

I HATED TO LEAVE HER, BUT... I HAD TO TALK TO YOU.
AFTER SHE COLLAPSED THE OTHER DAY, I ASKED A NEIGHBOR TO LOOK AFTER HER.
WHERE IS YOUR WIFE NOW?

AKEMI AND I KEEP TO OURSELVES, SO I DIDN'T MEET THE WOMAN NEXT DOOR UNTIL ABOUT A WEEK AGO.
I DON'T KNOW THE NEIGH- BORS VERY WELL.
THE HOUSE NEXT DOOR WAS VACANT FOR YEARS, BUT THEY MOVED IN ABOUT SIX MONTHS AGO.

HUH?

SOME-THING DOESN'T FIT.

SOME-THING DOESN'T ADD UP HERE.

I SEE...

YOU MEAN SOMETHING THAT CAN'T BE A DELUSION?

HOW CAN WE TELL WHAT'S REAL FROM WHAT'S A DELUSION?

EXACTLY.

FOR INSTANCE, WE KNOW THAT THE MURDER EIGHT YEARS AGO ACTUALLY HAPPENED.

WE CAN'T JUST DISMISS ALL OF YOUR WIFE'S CLAIMS AS HALLUCINATIONS, BUT WE CAN'T ACCEPT THEM ALL AS REALITY EITHER...

WE HAVE TO DRAW A LINE SOMEWHERE.

WE HAVE TO LOOK FOR THE PARTS OF THE STORY THAT DON'T FIT.

A-CHAN, WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

WE KNOW THAT SOMEONE CALLED "SATA NOBUYOSHI" WAS KILLED, BUT WE DON'T KNOW WHO REALLY DID IT.

IT'S AN UNSOLVED MYSTERY.

THE MURDER CASE FROM EIGHT YEARS AGO HAS ALREADY BEEN RESOLVED!

I MEAN, THEY NEVER MANAGED TO CATCH THE KILLER, BUT STILL, WE KNOW THAT HIS WIFE DIDN'T DO IT!

SHE'S A SICK WOMAN, THAT'S ALL...

SHE'S OBVIOUSLY SUFFERING FROM SOME KIND OF MENTAL ILLNESS!

I KNOW THIS IS PERSONAL FOR YOU...

BUT PLEASE, SEKIGUCHI-SENSEI, JUST LISTEN TO ME.

I DON'T...

PEOPLE WITH MENTAL ILLNESSES CAN HAVE INCREDIBLY VIVID AND DETAILED HALLUCINATIONS...

MUCH MORE THAN WHAT A NORMAL PERSON COULD IMAGINE.

IF YOU THINK THAT ANYTHING SHE SAID REALLY HAPPENED, THEN YOU MUST BE THE CRAZY ONE!

Or why anyone would want to take Mr. Sata's head, or what they might have done with it.

If we can figure out the parts of the case that don't make sense, maybe we can figure out the truth...

For instance, the military police officer's bizarre behavior.

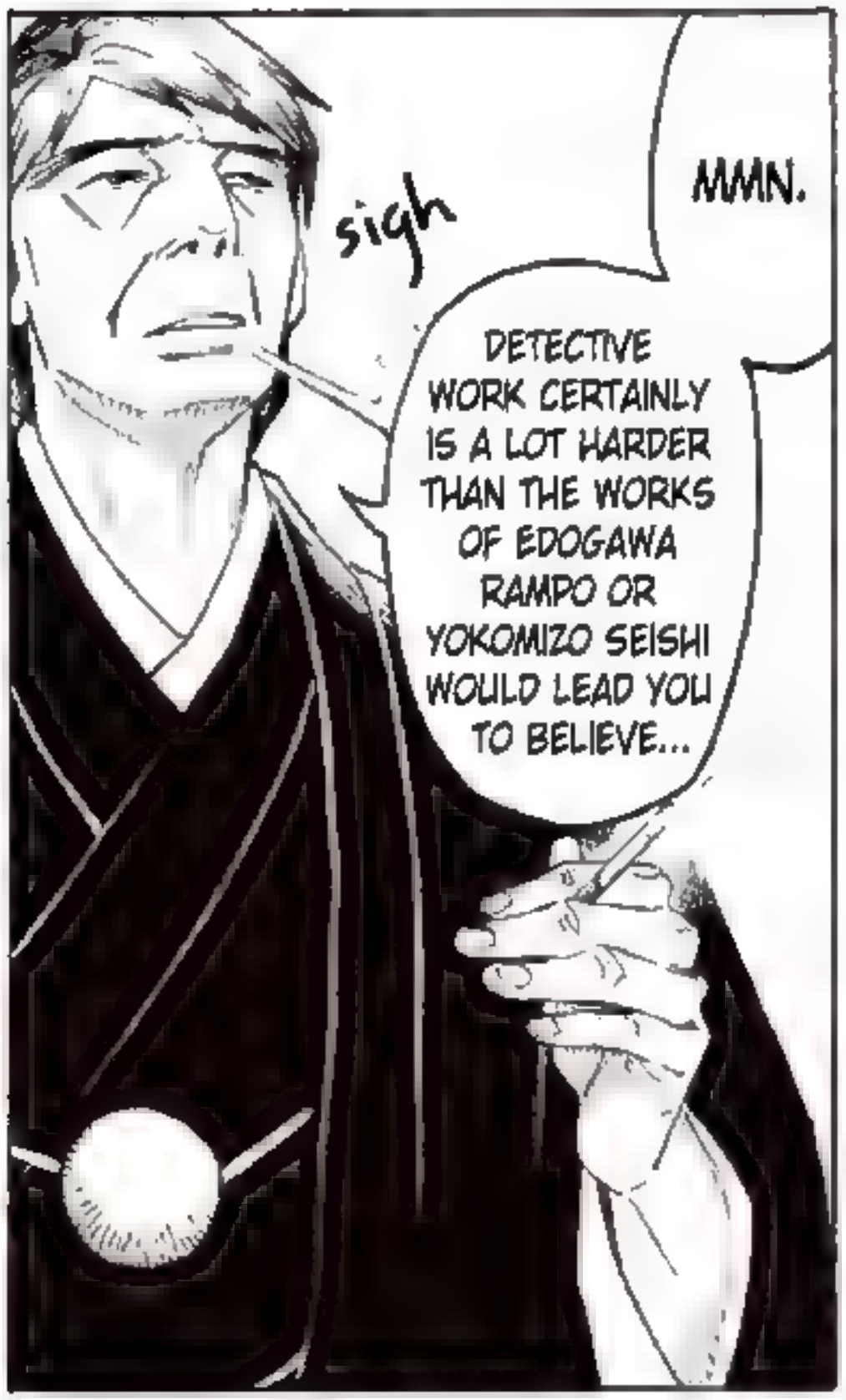
Or the disappear-ance of the real killer.

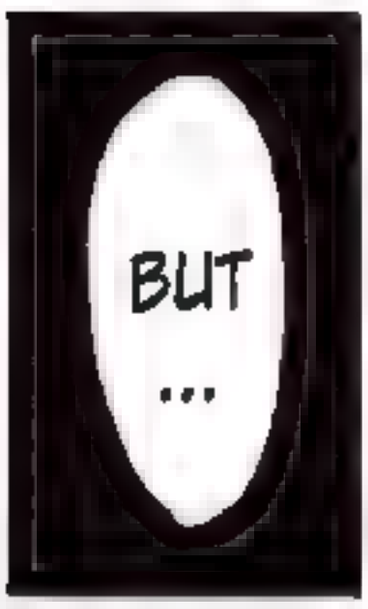
I'M LOOKING FOR THE POSSIBLE INCONSIS-TENCIES IN THE STORY.

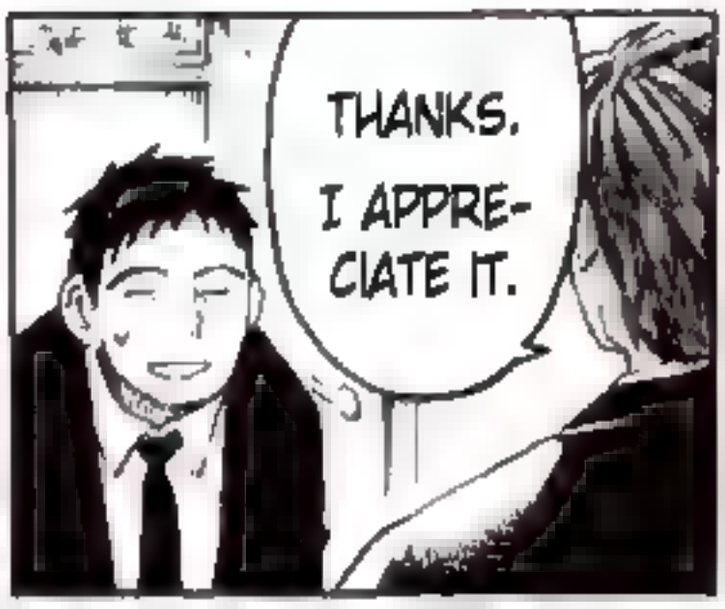
NOTE In the Bible, John the Baptist was the mentor of Jesus. When King Herod (the king who's famous for later ordering the execution of Jesus) decided to divorce his wife and marry his brother's ex-wife, JtB condemned him. Herod and his new wife were quite pissed off, so they had him jailed The new wife was still pissed, though, so she had her beautiful daughter, Salome, perform a seductive dance. Herod was so enthralled by the girl that he promised to give her anything she wanted... and she demanded the head of John the Baptist on a plate.

AND WE KNOW THAT YOUR AMNESIAC WIFE WAS VICTIMIZED BY SOMEONE WHO SHE CLAIMS WAS A MILITARY OFFICER...
WE KNOW THAT A SOLDIER WAS BEHEADED, AND WE KNOW THAT A WOMAN WAS SEEN CARRYING HIS SEVERED HEAD LIKE SALOME FROM THE BIBLE...
SO BEFORE WE GET INTO PAST LIVES AND UNDEAD CORPSES AND MYSTERY BLOOD IN THE GARDEN, LET'S FOCUS ON THE MURDER CASE FROM EIGHT YEARS AGO.

SHE MIGHT NEED TO BE HOSPI-TALIZED...
UHA...
This case is giving me the creeps... I don't want anything to do with it.
ANYWAY, UDAGAWA-SENSEI...
I CAN INTRODUCE YOU TO A PSYCHOLOGIST WHO MAY BE ABLE TO HELP YOUR WIFE.


sigh
MMN.
DETECTIVE WORK CERTAINLY IS A LOT HARDER THAN THE WORKS OF EDOGAWA RAMPO OR YOKOMIZO SEISHI WOULD LEAD YOU TO BELIEVE...





NOTE Yokomizo Seishi (1902-1981) was another Japanese novelist who was extremely popular in the postwar years. He's the creator of legendary fictional detective "Kindaichi Kousuke."

I STILL FEEL LIKE WE NEED TO FIGURE OUT WHAT REALLY HAPPENED EIGHT YEARS AGO IF WE'RE EVER GOING TO GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS.

SEKI-GUCHI-KUN!

Y-YES, SIR?

.....

HUH?

YOU HAVE A FRIEND WHO'S A PRIVATE DETECTIVE, RIGHT?

BUT KOIZUMI-KUN SAID THAT HE WAS A FAMOUS DETECTIVE...

Y-YOU CAN'T GO TO HIM!

S-SENSEI, WHATEVER YOU DO, DON'T GET HIM INVOLVED IN THIS!!!

CLATTER

JUMP

OH, I GUESS IT'S FINE IF HE'S NOT THAT FAMOUS.

I'M AFRAID SHE MUST HAVE BEEN MISTAKEN!

HE'S NOT A FAMOUS DETECTIVE AT ALL!

HE'S BARELY EVEN A DETECTIVE!

YOU CAN'T TALK TO HIM!!

Hey!

There's only one person that he could be talking about...

Enokizu Reijirou...!!

HE'S A SUPER PAIN IN THE ASS!!

ISN'T ENOKIZU-SAN A SELF-PROCLAIMED "SUPER DETECTIVE?"

Udagawa-sensei is expecting the kind of detective you'd find in a mystery novel... somebody cool like Akechi Kogorou, or Kindaichi Kousuke, or Norimizu Rintarou.

But Eno-san is nothing like that at all!

If he gets involved, he'll just make a mess of things...

SENSEI, MAYBE IT'S BETTER IF I TALK TO ENOKIZU-SAN.

THAT'S ALRIGHT, ISN'T IT, SEKIGUCHI-SENSEI?

I'M AT MY WIT'S END HERE...

BUT SEKIGUCHI-KUN, MAYBE HE COULD HELP!

PLEASE, LET ME TALK TO HIM!

I DON'T KNOW IF IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO GET THE POLICE INVOLVED...

AND ANYWAY, ISN'T IT OUTSIDE KIBA-SAN'S JURISDICTION?

AKA; THE BOSS

Kiba Shuutarou, Police Detective

RIGHT?

WHY DON'T WE ASK THE *BOSS*?

WAIT, I KNOW!

I... I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT...

Crap...
There's no other option...

THIS WOULD FALL UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE KANAGAWA POLICE DEPARTMENT...

AND AFTER OUR LAST CASE, I DON'T THINK KIBA-SAN IS ON VERY GOOD TERMS WITH THE KANAGAWA P.D.

I DON'T THINK HE CAN HELP...

JUST LEAVE IT TO ME!

AND I GUESS I'LL TALK TO THE PSYCHO-LOGIST...

SIGH

CHUUZENJI-KUN, ARE YOU SURE YOU DON'T MIND SPEAKING TO THE DETECTIVE FOR ME?

...SO IT'S ALRIGHT?

ALRIGHT.

IF MY WIFE NEEDS TO BE HOSPITALIZED, THEN I'LL DEAL WITH THAT FIRST.

OH NO, IT'S FINE.

I'M SORRY... IT GOT RATHER LATE.

SEE YOU LATER.

THANK YOU, SENSEI.

TAKE CARE.

ALRIGHT, I'M COUNTING ON THE TWO OF YOU.

VROOM

He's driving all the way back to Zushi tonight instead of staying at a hotel?

He must really be worried about his wife...

When someone is suffering from a mental illness, it affects the people who care about them, too...

I guess he's desperate for anything that will help her

SEKI-GUCHI-KUN,

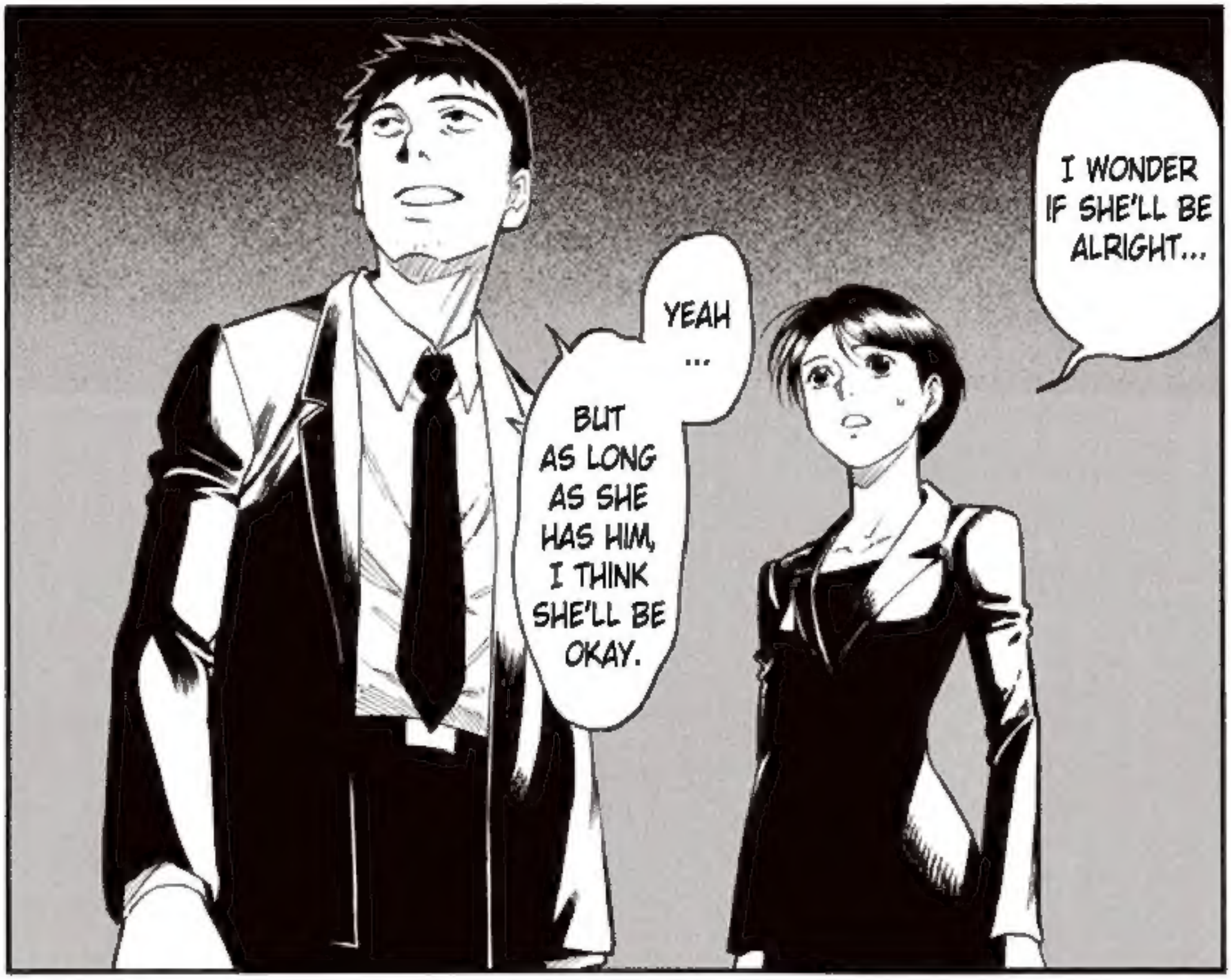
I CAN'T THANK YOU ENOUGH.

GRAB

ONE DAY, I HOPE I'LL BE ABLE TO LOOK BACK ON THIS LIKE IT'S SOMETHING FROM A NOVEL.

WHEN MY WIFE IS FEELING BETTER, I HOPE YOU'LL COME VISIT.

VROOM


I WONDER IF SHE'LL BE ALRIGHT...
YEAH ...
BUT AS LONG AS SHE HAS HIM, I THINK SHE'LL BE OKAY.

EVERYTHING WILL TURN OUT FINE IN THE END.